Remarks

Claims 1, 2, 7-12, 17-19 and 25 are pending and are under consideration.

Claims 1 and 18 are amended.

Claim 1 is amended to more distinctly claim the ethoxylated alcohol. The compound is now specifically the one of the working Examples. Support is in Example 1 and also on the bottom of page 6 of the disclosure.

Claim 18 is amended to be consistent with claim 1.

The ethoxylated alcohol of claim 1 is UNITHOX 420.

No new matter is added.

Claims 1, 2, 7-12, 17-19 and 25 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mor, et al., U.S. Pat. No. 6,146,757 in view of UNITHOX Ethoxylated Alcohols Technical Release 4022.2 (UNITHOX data sheet).

Applicants respectfully rebut these rejections.

Mor teaches wettable fibers or filaments comprising a thermoplastic polymer having incorporated therein a first wetting agent and a second wetting agent. The polymer is preferably an olefin polymer. The second wetting agent is at least one compound selected from the group consisting of an alkoxylated fatty alcohol and a polyoxyalkylene modified organosilicone polymer.

The alkoxylated fatty alcohol of Mor has an alkyl group of from 8 to 22 carbon atoms and on average about 1 to about 100 moles of ethylene oxide. The number of moles of ethylene oxide are preferably from about 2 to about 10 moles and most preferably from about 3 to about 6 moles, col. 6, lines 32-39.

The present ethoxylated alcohol compounds contain an alkyl group of 30 carbons.

Thus, the limitations of the present claims are not met by Mor.

The UNITHOX data sheet is cited as disclosing the present ethoxylated alcohol, specifically UNITHOX 420. The UNITHOX data sheet discloses certain ethoxylated alcohols as lubricants, emulsifiers or dispersants and not as melt addtives for plastics.

The Examiner states in the first paragraph of page 4 that it would have been obvious to substitute the alkoxylated fatty alcohol of Mor with UNITHOX 420 of the UNITHOX data sheet. It is stated that "motivated by the desire of forming a conventional wettable polymer fiber with a compound known in the art to be hydrophilic and suitable for use in textile processing and finishing and processing aids, and such a resulting combination of a known fiber process and a known compound would yield predictable results."

Applicants submit that the performance of UNITHOX 420 as a melt additive to improve the wettability of polyolefin fibers is unexpected and is not predictable.

To support this, two Rule 132 Declarations were submitted during prosecution. The first Gande Declaration was filed October 26, 2006. The second Gande Declaration was filed May 7, 2007.

In the first Declaration, present UNITHOX 420 is compared to UNITHOX 480 and UNITHOX 750, two other ethoxylated alcohols not of the present claims. The sample with an ethoxylated alcohol of the present invention displays a water absorption of 450%. The samples with UNITHOX 480 and 750 display a water absorption of 280% and 150%, respectively.

In the second Declaration, UNITHOX 420 is compared UNITHOX 550, another ethoxylated alcohol not of the present claims. The sample with present UNITHOX 420 displays a liquid absorption capacity of 74%. The sample with UNITHOX 550 has a liquid absorption capacity of 30%.

Thus, results are obtained for UNITHOX 420 compared to three other ethoxylated alcohols not of the present claims. UNITHOX 420 is superior in providing polyolefin fibers with liquid absorption characteristics. The three comparison UNITHOX products were chosen to rebut specific rejections during the course of prosecution.

These outstanding results are unexpected and could not have been predicted based on the cited art.

The present invention represents an important teaching to the public which cannot at all be gleaned from the combination of cited art.

In view of the two Gande Declarations and the above discussion, Applicants submit that the 35 USC 103(a) rejections are addressed and are overcome.

Further, the Examiner states in "Response to Arguments" (page 8), that "Applicants have not claimed water absorption or wettability, or a measurement associated with water absorption or wettability, or a structure or composition to which water absorption or wettability may be attributed."

Applicants point out that the present claims are indeed aimed at novel and non-obvious wettable polyolefin compositions. The melt blend of claim 1 is a composition to which water absorption and wettability may be attributed. The entire specification is aimed at wettable polyolefins. The results of the working Examples and the Gande Declarations are aimed at providing polyolefins with wettability. The composition claimed exhibits non-obvious results. Applicants respectfully submit that the composition is properly claimed.

The Examiner is kindly requested to reconsider and to withdraw the present rejections.

Applicants submit that the present claims are in condition for allowance and respectfully request that they be found allowable.

Respectfully submitted,

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